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5 Helpful Tips to Working with an Interpreter for an International Deposition

Language barriers are often a hurdle when dealing with litigation abroad. Finding the right interpreter for your law firm to handle these language differences can mean the difference between success and disaster. An experienced, professionally certified interpreter can ensure that your international deposition runs as smoothly and headache-free as possible.

Here are 5 tips to get you started on working with an interpreter for your next international deposition.

1. Understanding the types of interpreting

Knowing which type of interpreting services you need is crucial to selecting the right interpreter. The two most commonly used types of interpreting are consecutive and simultaneous. Consecutive interpreting is used for almost all international depositions.

In **consecutive interpretation**, the interpreter waits for the speaker to finish a sentence or an idea, and then renders the speaker's words into the target language. The speech is divided into segments, and the interpreter sits or stands beside the source-language speaker, listening and taking notes as the speaker progresses through the message. When the speaker pauses or finishes speaking, the interpreter then renders a portion of the message or the entire message in the target language. Consecutive interpreting is commonly used for:

- Depositions
- Teleconferences
- Client-attorney meetings
- Medical consultations
- Interviews
- Human Resources

In **simultaneous interpretation**, the participants wear headphones, and the interpreter renders the speaker's words into the target language as he or she is speaking. Due to the tremendous level of concentration required to perform this type of interpretation, simultaneous interpreters always work in teams of two. Usually, the interpreters work in a soundproof booth that enables everyone involved to focus on their work without the distraction of hearing another language. Simultaneous interpreting is commonly used for:

- Courtrooms
- Business or board meetings
- Training sessions
- Diplomatic conferences
- Broadcasting Media

2. Selecting an interpreter

First, look for an agency that has English-native interpreters who are professionally certified with experience in U.S. depositions and arbitrations abroad. Make sure your agency can also deliver the language pairing you desire. In selecting the right interpreter, assess the interpreter's background and experience to help break down any language barriers you may come across in the field. Optima Juris has developed a meticulous selection process, which ensures our clients always work with the most

seasoned professional interpreters with proven track records in U.S. depositions abroad.

3. Briefing the interpreter

Letting the interpreter understand your goals and expectations beforehand is imperative for a successful deposition. Think of the interpreter as an extension of your legal team. Familiarize the interpreter with the personnel attending the meeting. Provide information, technical vocabulary and any other documents to the interpreter well in advance of your event, so she or he has enough time to research any unfamiliar terms or items. A well prepared interpreter is the best interpreter.

4. The Dos and Don'ts

To effectively use an interpreter, remember to use these guidelines to make your international deposition a success:

- Speak clearly and slowly
- Avoid long or complex sentences
- Skip the jokes or humorous stories, these typically do not translate well
- Advise your group to speak one at a time
- Maintain eye contact with your audience when possible not at your interpreter
- Try not to interrupt your interpreter
- Eliminate excessive gestures or hand movements

5. Be Prepared

Plan your time carefully. Deposing a witness through an interpreter can take twice as long. Make sure you have scheduled enough time to get all your questions asked and answered. Always have paper and pen available in case the interpreter needs to take notes for any reason. Provide bottled water for the interpreters. Remember their voice is a tool.

If a witness understands the question you asked and begins answering in English without waiting for the interpreter to translate the question, instruct the witness to answer only through the interpreter. And, always remember to address your questions directly to the witness instead of the interpreter.

Lastly, thank your interpreter. Interpreting is a taxing job and mentally exhausting. Thanking them, even in their native language will go a long way.

Want to Find Out More?

Optima Juris has been helping law offices across the globe find the highest quality certified interpreters for over 15 years. If you should have questions about interpreting or any other deposition services, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#) or [fill out a free quote](#) to see how we can make your international deposition a complete success.

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